

The Voter

June, 2021: Vol. 48 No. 9

Officers for LWV-AOP 2021-2022

Office	Candidate	Term
Co-President	Linda Gahan	2 yr
Co-President	Ruth Reed	1 yr
Secretary	Ellie Taylor	1 yr
Treasurer	Elaine Laiewsky	2 yr
Board	Kathy Bargerion	2 yr
	Sandy Land	2 yr
	Sheila Crawford	1 yr
	Carolyn Bishop-McLeod	2 yr
	Jane Powell	2 yr
Nominating Committee	Shari Jung	
	Ann Fuhr	
	Patty Warner	

Co-President's message

There is much information to cover to finish out the 2020-2021 League year. Our regular newsletter publisher, Liz Vogt, is not available (and deserves a break!), so I'm putting this newsletter together in the simplest form I can. If nothing else, this issue shows how much we appreciate the work that Liz does! I am sending it as a pdf file and will have it posted on our website. As soon as I return from visiting family (late

June?), I will print and mail copies to all members except those who have indicated that they prefer not to receive paper copies of *The Voter*. Email me (reed.juniata@gmail.com) if you do not want a paper copy and have not already notified me.

Major news from the Annual Meeting: we voted to **change the name** from LWV of the Clemson Area to **LWV of Anderson, Pickens, and Oconee Counties (LWV-AOP)**.

The slate of officers presented by the Nominating Committee and the budget presented by the Budget Committee were approved unanimously. The Program for the local league was discussed at the Program planning meeting in January, and the decision was made to propose to continue the current Program. This Program was passed unanimously. For newer members, "Program" refers to the issues relating to governance that the League votes to pursue. The Program that we adopt forms the basis for our actions, including programs in the sense of presentations at meetings or for the public. Our Program is given on our website ([MyLO \(lwv.org\)](http://MyLO(lwv.org))) and is copied below:

Local Positions:

Education

Position: Adequate financing of education, greater fiscal autonomy for school boards, and structure of Pickens County School Board.

Growth Management

Position: We support intentional and collaborative growth management in the three-county area (Anderson, Oconee, Pickens) of South Carolina.

Representative Government

Position: Support for odd number of members of committees, commissions, and councils and seven member Pickens County Council

State and National Positions

Climate Change

Position: State and local Leagues, and individual League members, have a critical role to play in helping to limit future climate change and protect the planet.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Position: Promote peace in an interdependent world by working cooperatively with other nations and strengthening international organizations.

Meeting Basic Human Needs

Position: The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that one of the goals of social policy in the United States should be to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families and that the most effective social programs are those designed to prevent or reduce poverty.

Natural Resources

Position: Promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest.

Redistricting Reform

Position: Politicians should not be choosing their voters.

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

Position

Promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable, and responsive.

Social Policy

Position: Secure equal rights and equal opportunity for all. Promote social and economic justice, and the health and safety of all Americans.

United Nations

Position: The League of Women Voters supports a strong, effective United Nations and endorses the full and active participation of the United States in the UN system.

State Convention notes

Many of us attended the State Convention on May 2 and the workshops that took place the preceding week. I asked for comments from attendees. Two responses stood out.

Sarah McNeill commented on the redistricting workshop: “There is probably little we can do to influence the redistricting done by the state legislature. Nevertheless, we should still try by advocating for the voter rather than the incumbents. Legislators will say that they are not protecting incumbents but providing ‘consistency’. We can, however, influence the redistricting done at the local level. We will need to be vigilant, vocal, and consistent. I’m impressed by the tools and volunteers the state has developed and believe it a worthy project to undertake.”

Sandy Land wrote a most informative note, edited for length: “I enjoyed attending the Convention AND learned a lot in the process.

In the **Role of Delegates** workshop, I was surprised to learn that the LWVSC is actually small in terms of the number of members so even more impressed at the amount of work being done. This workshop helped me understand the responsibility I had as a delegate. It was reassuring to learn that I was to be “informed but not instructed”. I worried that I would have to vote on something without being able to ask my mentors how I should vote representing the Clemson Area (local) League.

A great **DEI** workshop was led by inspiring women committed to diversity, equity, inclusion AND justice. They provided reassurance that we don’t need all the answers as we move forward with messages such as

- Be ready to make but not repeat mistakes.
- Do the best you can until you know better, then do better.
- Work of the League is never done; take time to celebrate the accomplishments.
- There is no road map; we will figure it out.
- Acknowledge where we are in relation to where we want to go.

The **Program** workshop helped me begin to understand how the League develops and uses the position and issues statements.

Budget Workshop: Although I did not study the budget I was impressed by the knowledge of the Committee and felt confident they are doing a good job managing the finances of the organization. I was particularly impressed with the idea that the budget was built to be consistent with the priorities and goals of the organization.

Convention: The Convention itself was great. Networking, an important aspect of a typical conference was not easy. The cocktail parties helped but it just wasn't the same as being able to talk with others during breaks and between sessions. The technical support was very effective for successful execution. Business was conducted smoothly in part because of the workshops held on program and budget earlier in the week. Loved the music! Conference topics were timely and speakers were excellent. I could listen to all of them again and probably will. I'm so grateful to have been able to participate as a delegate. But I find myself in a dilemma. We are relatively few in number considering all that needs to be done. The 3 priorities for LWVSC for the next 2 years are voting issues, redistricting and education. How much time and effort should we as an organization and its members spend this limited energy on other issues like Health Care in general and Medicaid expansion in particular? I conclude that just as in the case of DEI there isn't a road map; we'll just have to figure it out."

Right on, Sandy!

Program Planning: All members are invited and encouraged to join program planning for next year. We will meet as a working group once or twice this summer to plan the speakers and topics for next year. Please send an email to Jill Gemmill jill.gemmill@gmail.com if you are interested.

Directory of Public Officials (DPO)

The Directories of Public Officials for Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens Counties will be printed and ready for distribution by the time you receive this newsletter. Many thanks to Alice Flower and others who did the work of updating the information.

Action Alerts

There are three national action alerts that are still active: (Since the Senate is not moving very fast, they may remain active for "awhile")

- Action Alert: [Congress Must Protect the Nation from Gun Violence](#)
- Action Alert: [Tell your senators to support the For the People Act](#)
- Action Alert: [Ask your senators to support DC statehood](#)

Anderson County to form a new League

By the time you read this, the necessary steps will be in process to recognize a Member At Large Unit (MAL) in Anderson County, which requires a minimum of eight members and a few designated leaders to walk them through the process of becoming a local League. Our League is a sponsor/big sister, with Holley Ulbrich and Janie Shipley guiding them through the steps. We have a mailing list of about 30 people who have expressed interest so far.

We will probably lose three or four members to the Anderson League, but have offered "dual citizenship" to all of our members in Anderson County (about a dozen). What this means is that they need to choose which League gets their dues and which (if either) they are willing to serve as a board member, but they can be on both mailing lists and attend meetings in either one.

The annual Women's Equality Day (August 24) celebration this year will be a joint project of our League and theirs as we welcome a sister League-to-be into the family of Leagues in South Carolina. Details will be sent as they are developed.

Anderson County is about the size of Oconee and Pickens combined, with five school districts and nine municipalities, so there is lots of opportunity to do voter service. The northern part of the county from Townville to Powdersville is growing rapidly and experiencing growing pains, while the southern parts (Starr, Iva Belton, Honea Path) are somewhat isolated and not sharing in the general prosperity. Lots of challenges and opportunities for a League to make a difference!

Submitted by Holley Ulbrich

CLIMATE CHANGE: A Looming Threat

How Our SC Legislature Voted to Protect Our Environment in 2021

The power of lobbying for positive environmental changes was evident as our 2021 legislative session closed on May 13. Several lobbyists worked together to help advance major bills that protect South Carolina's air, water, and land.

Environmental successes that our South Carolina League of Women Voters Supported and which are headed for the Governor's Desk:

Solar Property Tax Clarification

This pro-solar bill makes solar more accessible and affordable for more residents. It would not only prevent existing solar customers from being charged higher property taxes in the future, but it will also allow the solar industry to expand and thrive in South Carolina.

E-Waste Extension

This bill that extends the sunset of electronic waste regulations (Reg. 61-124). It will help to ensure that potentially toxic materials from e-waste are disposed of appropriately. It extends the sunset of the existing program for two years, which will provide the necessary time to identify and advance vital fixes to the current program.

Electric Vehicle Charging and Study Committee

A bill that makes it easier to charge electric vehicles (EVs) allows third-party entities to establish charging stations and allows them to charge users. This bill will help expand our EV infrastructure throughout the state. In addition, the House added a provision to establish a study committee to look at the environmental and economic impact of electrification of our state transportation sector.

Waste Tires

This much-needed bill improves regulation of waste tire disposal. Stockpiled tire waste burdens many communities and our environment. It clarifies what SC expects of waste tire facilities. This clarification enables enforcement and correction of compliance issues and helps users of waste tire facilities to know if they are operating according to the law.

There are several environmentally positive bills that will be discussed in conference committees and be presented again in 2022. These include a bill to break up DHEC into two or more entities (creating a separate Office of Environmental Services), a bill that regulates plastic recycling via pyrolysis, a Santee Cooper reform bill that focuses on clean energy and community inclusion, and a drinking water contaminants bill that helps control so-called "forever chemical's" (such as PFAS – read more here:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Per-and_polyfluoroalkyl_substances).

Submitted by Ellie Taylor

PLANS MOVE FORWARD IN THE SAFE GROUP

(SAFE: Safe, Accessible, and Fair Elections)

Recognizing that the next 18 months will require "all hands on deck" in the effort to maintain democratic elections, the SAFE Committee met to make plans for its work over the summer and into the fall. We are fortunate to have strong committee leadership – everyone on the committee is a leader!! Please let us know if you want to join the 10+ League members already engaged! Contact information below.

Committee members are engaging effectively with their respective County Election Commissions and Directors. Carolyn Bishop-McLeod presented to the Pickens Commission on H. 3822 that would secure safe SC elections and on US Senate Bill S.1, the For the People Act. Buzzy Adams, Sandy Land, and Janie Shipley reported on the Oconee Commission and the retirement of the long-term Director Joy Scharich. We discussed how LWVCA might honor her and also welcome the new director. Dee Bostick reported on Anderson County events.

All committee members had participated in Lynn Teague's monthly Zoom report on SC legislation of interest to the League. (On the Zoom meeting of 95 League members, 16 were LWVCA members!) Of particular interest is the amended version of H.3444 that would give SC legislators more power in choosing commissioners for County Election Commissions.

Planning is underway for individual meetings with our legislators over the summer as well as some training sessions to prepare us for these meetings and the use of legislative on-line services.

For more information, contact: Shari Jung spjung1@e.com or Janet Marsh jmarsh@clemson.edu.

HEALTH GROUP Asks for Your Help to Increase COVID 19 Vaccinations in our Area

The LWVCA Health Group has decided to work on a new goal: **Support and encourage COVID vaccinations in Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens Counties.**

As of June 15, only 39.6% of persons 12 and older in South Carolina were fully vaccinated. (COVID-19 Vaccination Dashboard | SCDHEC)

At the County level, the data show that Anderson was at 41.2%, Oconee was at 42.8%, and Pickens was at 38.3%. Although the numbers of cases, rates of positive tests, and hospitalizations are down in all three counties, these levels of vaccination are too low to protect us from a future surge. Lifting the mask mandates in schools and public buildings, without a higher rate of vaccination, compounds the risk of a community outbreak.

That is why the Health Group has decided to act, to do what we can to turn this situation around. Even if you can't help with the implementation of public activities, we can use your help with planning, communications and follow-up, all of which can be done by phone or by Zoom.

If you would like to work with us on this, or on Medicaid expansion, please contact Ruth Reed <reed.juniata@gmail.com>, Ellie Taylor <elptyl@bellsouth.net>, Janie Shipley <janrel@mindspring.com>, Janet Marsh <jmarsh@clermson.edu>, Eunice Lehmacher <eunicerkl@gmail.com>, or Sandy Land <sandyl@pa.net>.

VOTER REGISTRATION OPPORTUNITY

The League of Women Voters will be registering voters at the Juneteenth Festival on **June 19, 2021**, in Norton Thompson Park and on Main Street in downtown Seneca. They are expecting between 2000 - 4000 attendees during the festival. We will need volunteers from **11 AM to 5 PM** to conduct registration and answer the many questions that we get. Help setting up at 10 AM would be appreciated. Help with registering voters is needed from 11-5. If you can volunteer, please let me know. You can e-mail or text me the times you are available or call me if you have questions.

Cheryl Lee

Cell - 864-903-5076

cheryl_lee1234@bellsouth.net

NEW MEMBERS

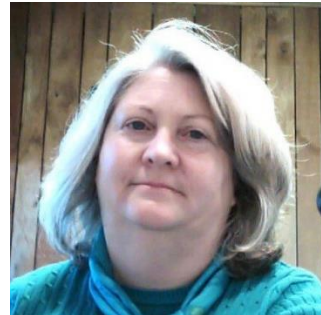
Anna McKenna

Anna McKenna grew up in South Carolina and attended Clemson University where she received three degrees, with an emphasis in Chemistry. She met her husband Jack through their student affiliation with Holy Trinity Episcopal church. After graduation, they took teaching positions in colleges in Minnesota. Anna taught Chemistry for over 32 years, primarily at St. Benedict College, a woman's college with connections to St. John's, with shared professors and classes.

The McKenna's two sons have positions in Minnesota and share their parent's interest in political issues and concerns. Upon retirement, Anna and Jack decided to return to South Carolina. With happy memories of their experiences at Holy Trinity and as students at Clemson, they found a home in Seneca and continue their support of both - they are active church members and have season football tickets.

Because Anna grew up in the Low Country, in the heart of the Corridor of Shame, she is passionate about issues concerning education.

Cherie Walker



A native Californian, Cherie Walker moved to Pickens, SC, via Casper, Wyoming, twenty-five years ago. In Wyoming, she was president of the Lion's Club, owned a shopping guide newspaper, and met her husband, who is a retired Pickens County school teacher. Cherie's son lives in the Philadelphia area, and is also a teacher. After moving to this area, Cherie worked as Director of Operations at the state level for the Guardian ad litem agency. She has her education in Graphic Design and has used that talent in her various positions. Now retired, she is looking forward to enjoying her garden, resuming painting, teaching as a trained Yoga instructor, and most assuredly, having time to participate in the League.

Janet Price



Janet Price was born and raised in the Midwest but has lived in SC since 1987; first in Sumter, and since 2008 in Anderson. She and her husband Marshall have been married 42 years and have 3 adult children and will soon welcome their second granddaughter.

Janet retired on January 1, 2020, from her position as Assistant Director at the Anderson County Library. She spent her career in all kinds of libraries: school, academic, military, and public, and enjoyed the variety of experience.

During the Covid months, she realized that she missed working with people. Now, Janet looks forward to participating in the LWV as a way to contribute in a meaningful way to our society and improve voter participation and education. She looks forward to meeting new friends, too.

Jeanne van den Hurk



Jeanne van den Hurk has joined the LWV because she is very concerned about civil rights and threats to our democratic institutions. She has lived in upstate South Carolina since 2006 and in Belton since 2016. Her husband, Peter, a professor and researcher in Environmental Toxicology at Clemson University since 2001, is originally from the Netherlands.

Jeanne lived in South Korea for four years teaching English to Korean college students. She experienced first-hand the political and civil crisis when then-President Park Chung-Hee was assassinated and the country was under martial law for nearly a year, as journalists were abducted and never heard from again, and college campuses were closed for months at a time and patrolled by riot police.

Jeanne has a background in sales and project management in the newspaper industry, as well as the fields of publishing and public relations. For eight years, she imported antiques from Europe and sold her merchandise at antique markets in the US, such as Scott Antique Market in Atlanta, and Round Top, Texas.

She and Peter travel to Europe in the summers and Jeanne gardens, sews, loves to cook. She and Peter each have grown children living in Spain, Maryland, and Virginia.